

and altogether "everything in the garden would be lovely." But would it? If it were at all likely that the Navy would rest satisfied with having its own personnel under its own sole control, it would be very difficult to make out a case against the transfer. But does anyone seriously believe that the matter would end there?

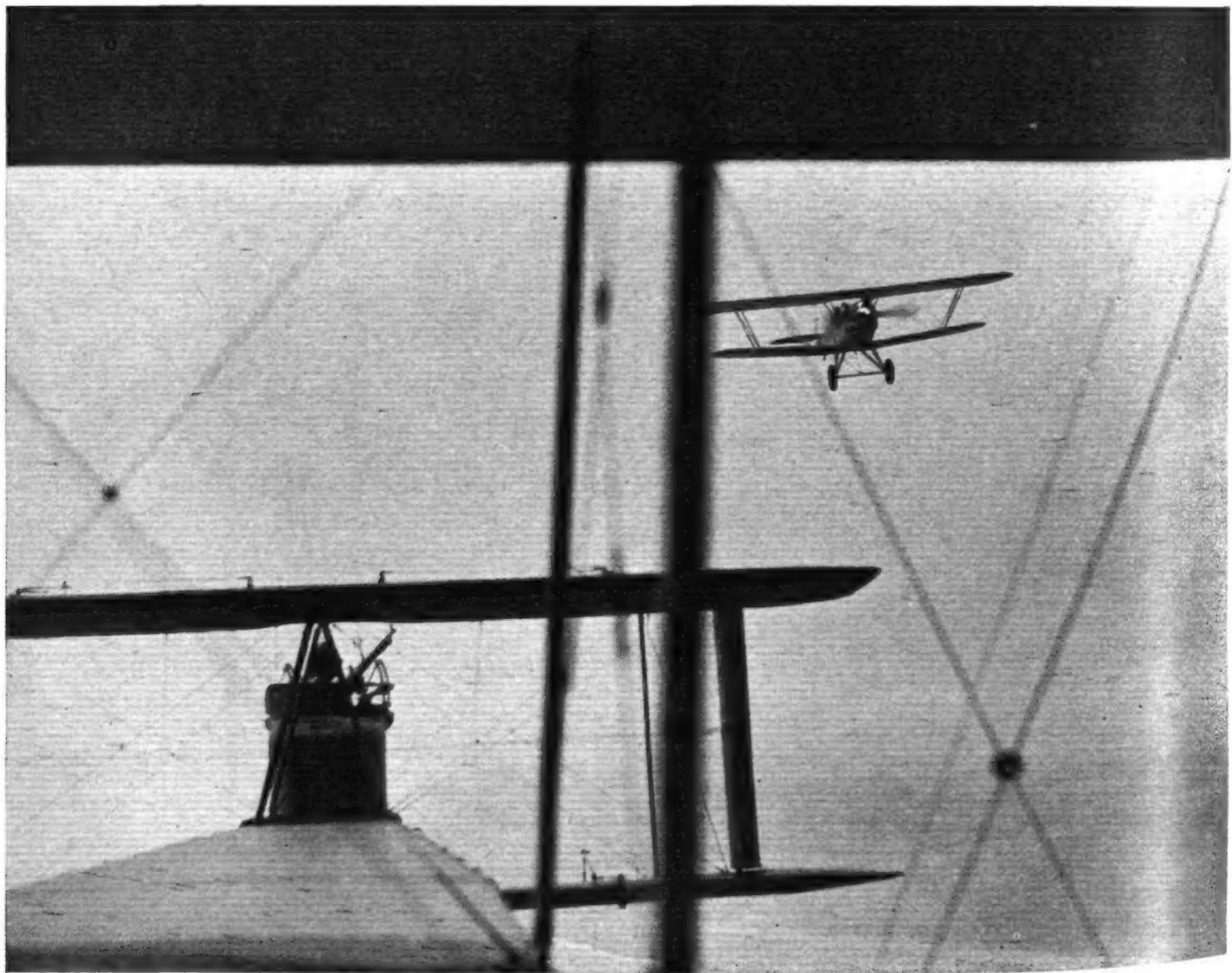
Useless Duplication

Before long it is inevitable that the Navy would argue that the Air Ministry could not possibly meet the needs of the Navy in the matter of supplies of aircraft and aero engines, knowing little or nothing about the Navy's requirements. The logical outcome would be that in time the Admiralty would desire to order its equipment direct, and, apart from an undesirable competition for deliveries, that would inevitably mean the setting up of a great deal of machinery similar to that which already exists at the Air Ministry. Research would follow next, and in the end we should have a complete duplication which could only lead to overlapping and waste.

Mr. Churchill's attempt to blame the present system for what he described as the lack of numbers and inefficiency of the Fleet Air Arm's equipment was not worthy of him. He knows, no one better, that the Navy orders

what it wants and pays for it. If it has not been able to persuade the Treasury of the urgency of its needs, that is hardly the fault of the Air Ministry. One hesitates to use the expression about Mr. Churchill, but he was definitely "talking through his hat" when he stated that the Fleet Air Arm has no flying boats that bore any comparison to those of leading foreign powers. The Fleet Air Arm, until very recently, had no flying boats at all, and only now are the Supermarine Walrus amphibians being delivered. They have not been in service with the fleet long enough nor in sufficient numbers to judge of their value. And, in any case, it is not the Air Ministry's fault that the Fleet Air Arm has not previously had flying boats. Had the Admiralty wanted flying boats sooner, doubtless they would have been provided. The Admiralty, and not the Air Ministry, decides what it wants.

Altogether, Mr. Churchill was not at his best in the debate on the Supplementary Navy Estimates. His attempt to paint the Air Ministry as the overburdened, too-tired-to-do-anything establishment, and the Admiralty as the "powerful and well-established department longing to assume full responsibility," was not very convincing.



WHAT THEY CAN'T BE SHOWN: Empire Air Day is on May 23. Every effort is being made to show the taxpayer and his family how the R.A.F. keeps in training, and the various units are organising some magnificent shows for the occasion. The thrills of actual Service flying must perforce remain untasted, but an admirable impression is given by such photographs as this one, which, taken at Martlesham, shows the R.A.F.'s newest army co-operation machine—the Hawker Hector with 725/805 h.p. Napier Dagger—on the tail of a Pegasus-Virginia. (Flight photograph.)